



## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This child protection policy was written: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017

### Big Time Academy Ltd:

Big Time Academy is a performing arts school and production company based in Mill Hill, North West London. It is partnered with the pre-school franchise, Petite Performers Mill Hill.

The academy offers classes in dance, drama, singing and musical theatre for children aged 16 months – 18 years. Alongside these classes Big Time provide family entertainment throughout the year in the form of theatrical shows, workshops and holiday schools.

### Responsibility:

Big Time has a responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people they come into contact with. The need for guidelines and procedures is important to ensure that this is done with understanding and clarity.

**The persons with lead responsibility for safeguarding within the organisation are:** Nicole Michelle Feeley & Adam Morley

All staff and volunteers are made aware of this policy and the process for reporting concerns. To ensure that all staff abide by this policy, all staff are required to read and sign this document.

### Our safeguarding policy:

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, company directors, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of **Big Time Academy Ltd.**

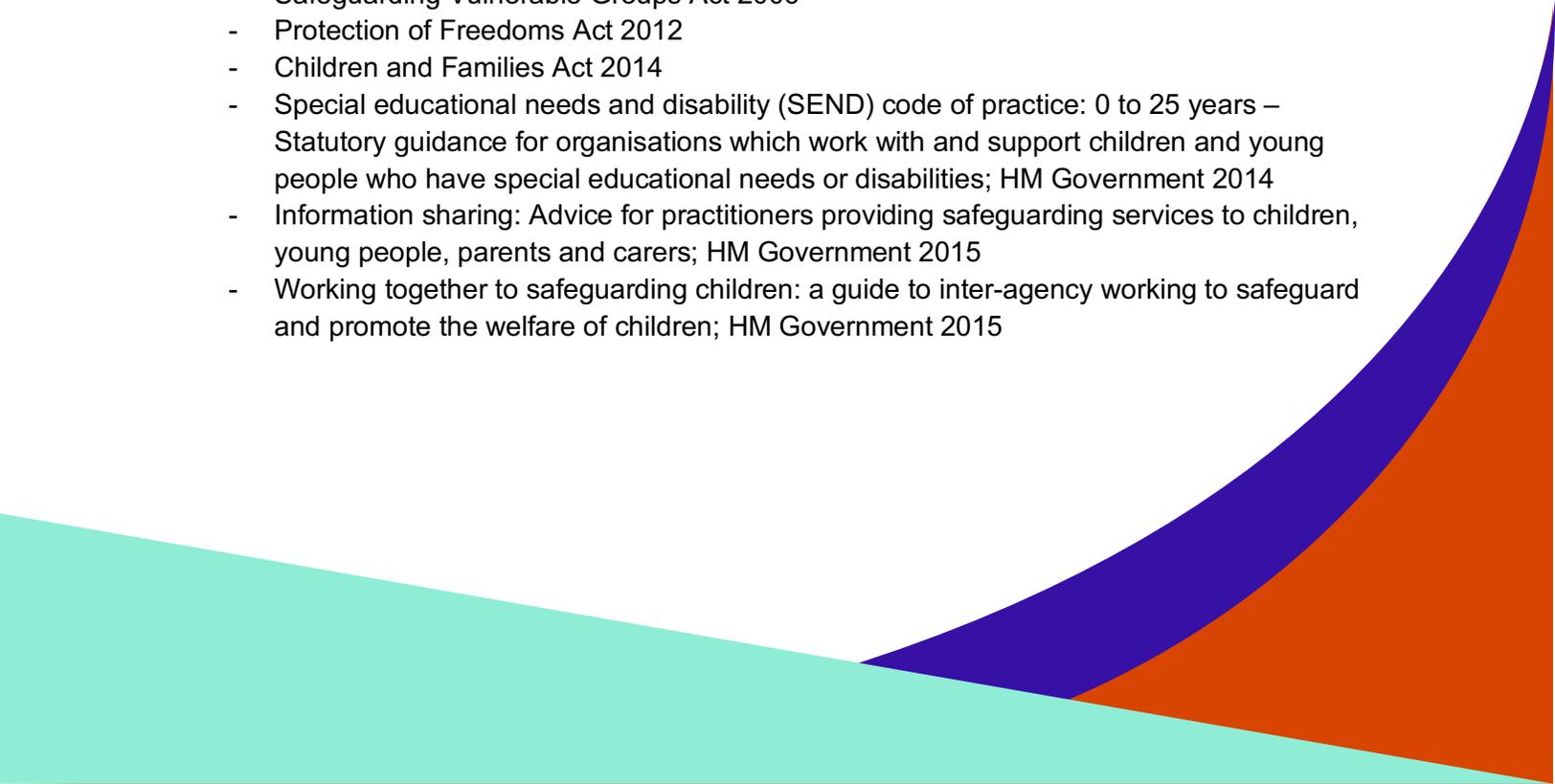
The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children and young people who receive Big Time Academy's services. This includes the children of adults who use our services;
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection;

Big Time Academy believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

### Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
  - United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
  - Data Protection Act 1998
  - Human Rights Act 1998
  - Sexual Offences Act 2003
  - Children Act 2004
  - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
  - Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
  - Children and Families Act 2014
  - Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
  - Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015
  - Working together to safeguarding children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2015
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**We recognize that:**

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- All children regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

**We will seek to help children and young people safe by:**

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, one-to-one discussions
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

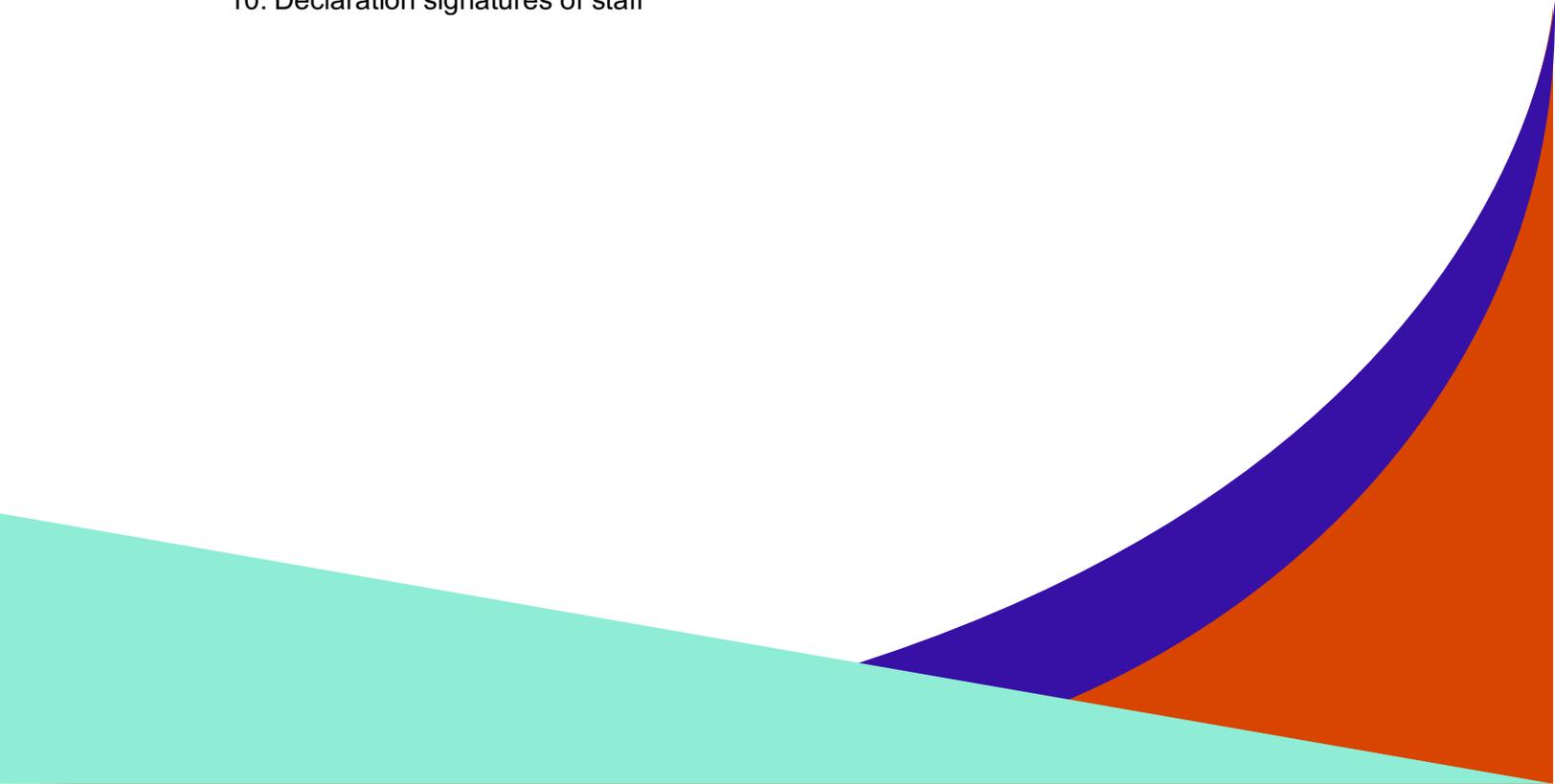
**CEOP**

[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

**NSPCC Helpline**

0808 800 5000

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## 1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances

## 2. Child protection

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refer to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

## 3. Children

Anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, Is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection.

## 4. Definitions of harm

### **Abuse**

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those know to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

### **Physical Abuse**

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also

be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Emotional Abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## **Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

This is not an exhaustive list and it must be recognized that it is not the role of staff/volunteers to assess whether children or young people have suffered harm. Staff / volunteers / child protection coordinator do have a duty to report any concerns about harm in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Guidelines and Procedures.

### **5. Recognition of harm**

The harm or possible harm of a child may come to your attention in a number of possible ways;

- Information given by the child, his/her friends, a family member or close associate.
- The child's behavior may become different from the usual, be significantly different from the behavior of their peers, be bizarre or unusual or may involve 'acting out' a harmful situation in play.
- An injury which arouses suspicion because;
  1. It does not make sense when compared with the explanation given.
  2. The explanations differ depending on who is giving them (e.g. differing explanations from the parent/ carer and child).
  3. The child appears anxious and evasive when asked about the injury.
- Suspicion being raised when a number of factors occur over time, for example, the child fails to progress and thrive in contrast to his/her peers.

- Contact with individuals who pose a 'risk to children' ('Guidance on Offences Against Children', Home Office Circular 16/2005). This replaces the term 'Schedule One Offender' and relates to an individual that has been identified as presenting a risk or potential risk of harm to children. This can be someone who has been convicted of an offence listed in Schedule One of the Children and Young Person's Act 1933 (Sexual Offences Act 2003), or someone who has been identified as continuing to present a risk to children.

## **6. Acting on concerns**

No professional should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to keeping a child safe. If a professional has concerns about a child's welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer harm, then they should share the information with local authority children's social care.

### **Seeking Medical Attention**

If a child has a physical injury and there are concerns about abuse;

If medical attention is required then this should be sought immediately by phoning for an ambulance, attending the Emergency Department or Minor Injury Unit depending on the severity of the injury. You should then follow the procedures for referring a child protection concern to Local Authority Children's Social Care. Any safeguarding concerns should be shared with the Ambulance staff/ Medical and nursing staff in order that they can appropriately assess and treat the child and share relevant information.

### **Managing a disclosure**

- Listen to what the child has to say with an open mind.
- Do not ask probing or leading questions designed to get the child to reveal more.
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make note of the discussion, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, as well as what was said.
- Do not ask children to write a statement.

- Never promise the child that what they have told you can be kept secret. Explain that you have responsibility to report what the child has said to someone else.
- The designated lead for child protection within **Big Time Academy** must be informed immediately.

## **7. Referring concerns about a child**

The designated safeguarding lead will act on behalf of **Big Time Academy** in referring concerns or allegations of harm to Local Authority Access and Assessment Team or the Police Public Protection Unit. In the case of it being out of hours the Immediate Help Team should be contacted.

It is not the role of the designated safeguarding lead to undertake an investigation into the concerns or allegation of harm. It is the role of the designated safeguarding lead to collate and clarify details of the concern or allegation and to provide this information to the Local Authority Access and Assessment Team, or Locality Team if Children's Social Care is already involved, whose duty it is to make enquiries in accordance with Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

### **Consent**

Professional's should seek to discuss any concerns with the family (including the child where appropriate) and where possible seek their agreement to making referrals to the Local Authority Access and Assessment Team. This should only be done where such discussion and agreement seeking will not place the child at an increased risk of significant harm.

It should be noted that parents, carers or child may not agree to information being shared, but this should not prevent referrals where child protection concerns persist. The reasons for dispensing with consent from parents, carer or child should be clearly recorded and communicated with the Local Authority Access and Assessment Team.

In cases where an allegation has been made against a family member living in the same household as the child and it is your view that discussing the matter with the parent would

place the child at risk of harm, or where discussing it may place a member of staff/ volunteer at risk, consent does not have to be sought prior to the referral being made.

### **Preparing to discuss concerns about a child with Children's Social Care**

Try to sort out in your mind why you are worried, is it based on:

- What you have seen;
- What you have heard from others;
- What has been said to you directly.

**Try to be as clear as you can about why you are worried and what you need to do next:**

- This is what I have done;
- What more do I need to do?
- Are there any other children in the family?
- Is the child in immediate danger?

**In the conversation that takes place the duty Social Worker will seek to clarify:**

- The nature of the concerns;
- How and why they have arisen;
- What appear to be the needs of the child and family; and
- What involvement they are having or have had with the child and / or family.

**Questions Children's Social Care may ask at initial contact:**

- Agency (i.e. school, etc.) address and contact details of referrer;
- Has consent to make the referral been gained? Information regarding parents' knowledge and views on the referral;
- Where consent has not been sought to make a referral, you will be asked to explain what informed your decision making;
- Full names, dates of birth and gender of children;

- Family address and, where relevant, school/nursery attended;
- Previous addresses;
- Identity of those with parental responsibility;
- Names and dates of birth of all members of the household;
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents;
- Any special needs of the children or of the parents and carers;
- Any significant recent or past events;
- Cause for concern including details of allegations, their sources, timing and location;
- The child's current location and emotional and physical condition;
- Whether the child needs immediate protection;
- Details of any alleged perpetrator (name, date of birth, address, contact with other children);
- Referrer's relationship with and knowledge of the child and his or her family;
- Known involvement of other agencies;
- Details of any significant others;
- Gain consent for further information sharing / seeking;
- The referrer should be asked specifically if they hold any information about difficulties being experienced by the family/household due to domestic violence, mental illness, substance misuse and/or learning difficulties.

### **Expectation of feedback**

Children's Social Care should acknowledge a written referral within one working day of receiving it. If the referrer has not received an acknowledgment within 3 working days, they should contact Children's Social Care again.

### **8. Allegations against staff members / volunteers**

If any member of staff or volunteer has concerns about the behavior or conduct of another individual working within the group or organisation including:

- Behaving in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child;

- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

The nature of the allegation or concern should be reported to the designated officer for dealing with allegations within Big Time Academy immediately.

The member of staff who has a concern or to whom an allegation or concern is reported should not question the child or investigate the matter further.

The designated officer for Big Time Academy will report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

## **9. Recruitment and selection**

It is important when recruiting paid staff and volunteers to adhere to Big Time Academy's recruitment policy. This will ensure potential staff and volunteers are screened for their suitability to work with children and young people.

### **Big Time Academy's recruitment policy:**

A person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults will be breaking the law if they work or volunteer or try to work or volunteer with those groups. If Big Time Academy knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups they will also be breaking the law. If there is an incident where a member of staff or volunteer has to be dismissed because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or would have been if they had not left, Big Time Academy will notify the DBS.

### **Link to Keeping Children Safe in Education:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

**10. Declaration for staff**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read and am familiar with the contents of the following documents and understand my role and responsibilities as set out in these document(s):

- (1) Big Time Academy's child protection policy
- (2) **'Keeping Children Safe in Education'** link

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Role within school (*i.e. teacher, volunteer*) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read and am familiar with the contents of the following documents and understand my role and responsibilities as set out in these document(s):

- (1) Big Time Academy's child protection policy
- (2) **'Keeping Children Safe in Education'**

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Role within school (*i.e. teacher, volunteer*) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

